

Apt. 316
1900 South Eads Street
Arlington, Va. 22202
June 20, 1970

Joshua Lederberg, M. D.
School of Medicine
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Dr. Lederberg:


A column authored by you entitled "A Good Try
Poses Problem" and syndicated in the Washington
Post of October 11, 1969, concerned itself with
mustard oil and pointed out doubts as to its safety. (S)

In a recent yoga course that I attended, the
instructor recommended rubbing mustard oil into the
skin as a means of skin improvement.

In view of the fact that the recommendation
relates to a use of mustard oil different from that
with which your article was concerned, I wonder if
I may have your comment relative to the safety or
lack of safety of the use of mustard oil as it was
recommended by the instructor.

I enclose a self addressed envelope for your
convenience.

Sincerely,



Eugene J. Kaplan

(*Rusch, H.P., et al., Acta Union Intern'l against Cancer..

11: 699-703 1955. Dr Rusch is at the Univ of Wis Medical Sch.)

In view of experimental work* that shows that the chronic appli-
cation of mustard oil to the skin of mice will induce skin **tumors**
~~sk cancers~~, I would hardly recommend its use in this way. It is
of course possible that these laboratory findings are irrelevant
to man, but if you want to be a guinea pig you ought to recruit
yourself into a medically controlled study. Sincerely,